

## IVY LEAGUE STUDY RANKS KENTUCKY NEAR TOP IN GOVERNMENTAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

*Commonwealth climbs to 4<sup>th</sup> – from 44<sup>th</sup> in 2002 – in Brown University analysis of states*

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Governor Ernie Fletcher’s initiative to bring Kentucky state government into the digital age has been singled out for honors in an Ivy League study.

Kentucky was ranked fourth among all the states in the eighth annual “e-government analysis” published by researchers at Brown University’s Taubman Center for Public Policy. The study evaluated the extent to which state governments and selected federal agencies use Internet-based technology to improve public access to governmental services.

The study, “State and Federal E-Government in the United States, 2007,” praised Kentucky’s Web site – [www.kentucky.gov](http://www.kentucky.gov) – for “presenting clear, organized, and consistent Web pages that offer citizens a plethora of resources, services, information, and multimedia.”

Only Delaware, Michigan and Maine were ranked ahead of Kentucky. By contrast, the same study in 2002 ranked Kentucky 44<sup>th</sup>.

“I am gratified that an independent research study has recognized the great strides we have made in using technology to improve services and give Kentuckians unprecedented access to their state government,” Governor Fletcher said. “That’s why my administration launched the *Prescription for Innovation* in 2004 – to bring about an aggressive technology turnaround for the Commonwealth.”

Ease of public access was a significant factor in the researchers’ findings. Their report said of Kentucky that “pages throughout the state’s website are ... well constructed and feature easy to navigate menus, most with a specific link to that department’s online services, several audio and video clips, easy access links that take them back to the portal page, links that show them an A-Z Kentucky agency list, and centralized privacy policies.”

The entire report can be viewed at [www.InsidePolitics.org](http://www.InsidePolitics.org).

A primary objective of Kentucky’s *Prescription for Innovation* is to improve and expand online government services for citizens of the commonwealth. In three years, the quantity and quality of services have improved substantially, and citizen use of online state services has increased accordingly.

During the 2006 calendar year, citizen visits to Kentucky.gov reached 24 million, averaging more than 2 million visits per month and representing a 62 percent increase in use over 2005. Thirty-eight percent of all visits to the portal occur while government

offices are closed, demonstrating how technology makes it easier to access government services.

“While we celebrate the significance of being recognized as a national e-government leader, we also acknowledge that there is plenty still to be done,” Governor Fletcher said. “The *Prescription for Innovation* identifies the importance of providing better access to government at all levels and establishes the goal of ensuring that all local governments are well-represented online. We will continue to work to ensure that goal is met, just as we are working to ensure that all Kentuckians have the ability to access those services from home through a broadband connection.”

Currently, ConnectKentucky is working in partnership with the Commonwealth Office of Technology and Kentucky.gov to ensure that all local governments have a meaningful online presence. Prior to the *Prescription for Innovation*, barely a third of county governments had a Web site available to citizens.

The e-government study, headed by Darrell M. West, director of the Taubman Center at Brown, analyzed 1,487 state Web sites. Research was completed during June and July 2007.

State Web sites were evaluated for the availability of various electronic features, including online publications, databases, audio and video clips, foreign language content and translation services, advertisements, premium fees, user payments or fees, disability access, privacy and security policies, online services, digital signatures, credit card payments, e-mail addresses, comment forms, automatic e-mail updates, Web site personalization, personal digital assistance accessibility and readability level.

For more information about Governor Fletcher’s *Prescription for Innovation*, visit: [www.connectkentucky.org](http://www.connectkentucky.org)

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